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MAY 4.

Mr. GEO. W. TRYON, JR., in the chair.

Twenty-eight persons present.

The Railway Cutting at Gray's Ferry Road.—Mr. AUBREY H. SMITH remarked that the Schuylkill River, as is well known, makes a curve to the westward just below the U. S. Arsenal grounds, returning to its southwardly course at Harmar's wharf, nearly a mile below. The new iron bridge of the Baltimore and Ohio R. R. Co. spans the river obliquely from the northern side of Bartram's Garden to Harmar's at the height of about 23 feet above tide. The tract of land half enclosed by the river is elevated about 50 feet above tide and is composed of the same diluvial gravels and clays which form the plain on which stands the old city of Philadelphia.

The railroad proceeds from the bridge by a deep cut of half a mile transversely to the streets on the city plan northeastwardly to the low grounds on the river below the arsenal, thus forming a chord to the arc of the river bend. The cut is a deep one, as the railroad company was required by its agreement with the city to construct its line beneath Wharton Street and the Gray's Ferry Road.

Soon after leaving the bridge the cutting enters the plateau and is soon twenty-five or more feet deep. The excavation is through yellow clays and river gravels to the depth of about twenty-five feet. It then discloses a compact bed of dark blue clay, sharply defined under the gravel, apparently a river deposit. Its thickness is not exactly known but it exceeds six feet. This bed of blue clay extends from just beyond the Harmar house to the Gray's Ferry Road, a distance of 500 or 600 yards.

It is apparently thickest near the Harmar house, but thins out at the Gray's Ferry Road, where the excavations show it to be only about four feet thick and to rest upon a bed of yellow gravel or sand. It does not appear at all northeast of the Gray's Ferry Road.

Some observations and inquiry in November, 1885, for organic remains resulted, so far as he was aware, only in showing that the blue clay contains numerous genera and species of diatoms and several species of recent woods. The observations on the diatoms are due to Professor Koenig. The gravels and clays above the blue clay were barren of all organic forms. The woods then obtained were apparently birch, maple or oak, and were neither mineralized or decomposed. They came from the dump heap where the excavated clay was deposited by the workmen, but are doubtless from the blue clay bed.

The specimen of wood exhibited to the Academy to-night is of some coniferous tree, probably a white cedar, *Cupressus thyoides*. This tree, until very recently, was common along the Schuylkill and Delaware, and isolated specimens may still exist there. The wood now shown is in no degree mineralized and but slightly decomposed. It came from a log which lies in the blue clay just north of the Wharton Street Bridge and is still to be seen there. No shells, so far as he knew, have been found in the excavation, but more careful search in this direction might be rewarded.

The blue clay bed appears to mark one of the periods of quiescence in the glacial action which, in its torrential course, scooped out the valleys of the Schuylkill and Delaware and afterwards filled them up again at the margin of tide-water. It harmonizes itself with similar beds which have been observed at several points along the shores of the rivers—notably at the Lazaretto and Printz Hall, Tinicum, and near Camden, N. J.

There were probably several of these periods of comparative rest in the course of the retirement of the ice from northern Pennsylvania.

The artesian well of Mr. Black, at Black's Island, below Fort Mifflin, which is 456 feet deep, disclosed at the depth of 100 feet a bed of white beach sand 47 feet in thickness, as well as many of gravel and clay. The decomposed gneiss rock was reached at the depth of 240 feet or thereabouts.

Section of the strata of Black's Island, Delaware River below Fort Mifflin, from the artesian well of E. N. Black, Esq. :

Blue alluvium,	45 feet.
Sand,	1 “
Blue alluvium,	33 “
Gravel,	6 “
White clay,	2 “
Beach sand,	47 “
Gravel,	10 “
Clay,	3 “
Red gravel,	6 “
White gravel and sand,	17 “
Beach sand and gravel,	38 “
Decomposed gneiss (mica),	20 “
Gneiss rock,	228 “
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	456 feet.

MAY 11.

The President, Dr. LEIDY, in the chair.

Twenty-two persons present.

Fatal Cases of Trichiniasis.—The President read a letter from Mr. EUGENE A. RAU, of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, giving an account of recent cases of fatal trichiniasis arising from imperfectly